



Mr George Crofts

You Know This Face

Fireman George Crofts still bears the scars from injuries he got when he fell - through a 12ft, high concrete roof which disintegrated beneath him.

Luckily the blaze below had been put out or he might not have been around to tell the story; and it's just one of many in his 18 years with the Sheffield Fire Brigade.

One of his more hectic experiences was 36 hours' non-stop duty in December, 1940, when the city was being blitzed.

The water mains were out of action and George was with crews filling mobile tanks at the River Don and rushing them back to fires raging along The Moor.

Comradeship

"It looked at the time as if half the city was alight," he said. But what sticks in his mind most was the kindness, the comradeship shown by passers-by and people living close at hand. They were there supplying tea, sandwiches and cigarettes.

In his time, 42-year-old George has fought big blazes at steel works and dealt with the domestic chimney fire.

He has worked with a jet 100 feet up on the turntable ladder and worn breathing apparatus to search through blinding smoke for- injured victims.

Always Ready

He has freed sobbing children trapped in fences, helped free a man stuck halfway in his own cellar grate, pumped out- sinking barges and given aid to distressed cattle.

"But you have never done everything in this job." says George. "Yon are always meeting something new."

And those fire engines standing polished and gleaming in the station are not just show models. They more often than not come back from a call thick with grease and grime.

All appliances are cleaned and re-serviced instantly ready for the next clang of the alarm bell.

Versatility

The modern firefighter has to be skilled in many things besides directing a jet hose or swinging his axe.

Mr. Crofts has in past years taken courses in first aid, the internal combustion engine, oxy-acetylene cutting, physical training, and Civil Defence.

He works a 56 hour week—three days (9 a.m. to 6 p.m.), three nights (6 p.m. to 9 a.m.) followed by three days leave.

Married, with a daughter of 12, Mr. Crofts lives with his family at Southview Road, Sheffield. A great believer in the do-it-yourself cult, his hobbies are carpentry and interior decorating.